January/February 2000 $2.50

MONTANA OUTDOORS

Special Photo Issue

MONTANA OUTDOORS

January/February 2000
Volume 31, Number 1

A new century. A new millennium. And a new Montana.

A few years ago, the New Yorker magazine did a story on the future according to the Walt Disney Company. The magazine reported that "after decades of eager futurism, the world's largest entertainment company is traveling to the past in hopes of something better." Michael Eisner—the CEO of Disney—had reportedly put the brakes on a multimillion-dollar intergalactic entertainment venture called "Tomorrowland." Eisner asked, "How do you show people the future when the future is Montana?"

In each of the seven years I've served as governor, we have seen almost ten times more people visiting Montana than live here. It tells us that people the world over are looking for places like Montana and the security of a simple life they hope to find. Montana, in the minds of many, is not just a beautiful place with friendly people. Rather, it is seen as a specific way of life that in large measure takes place in the out-of-doors.

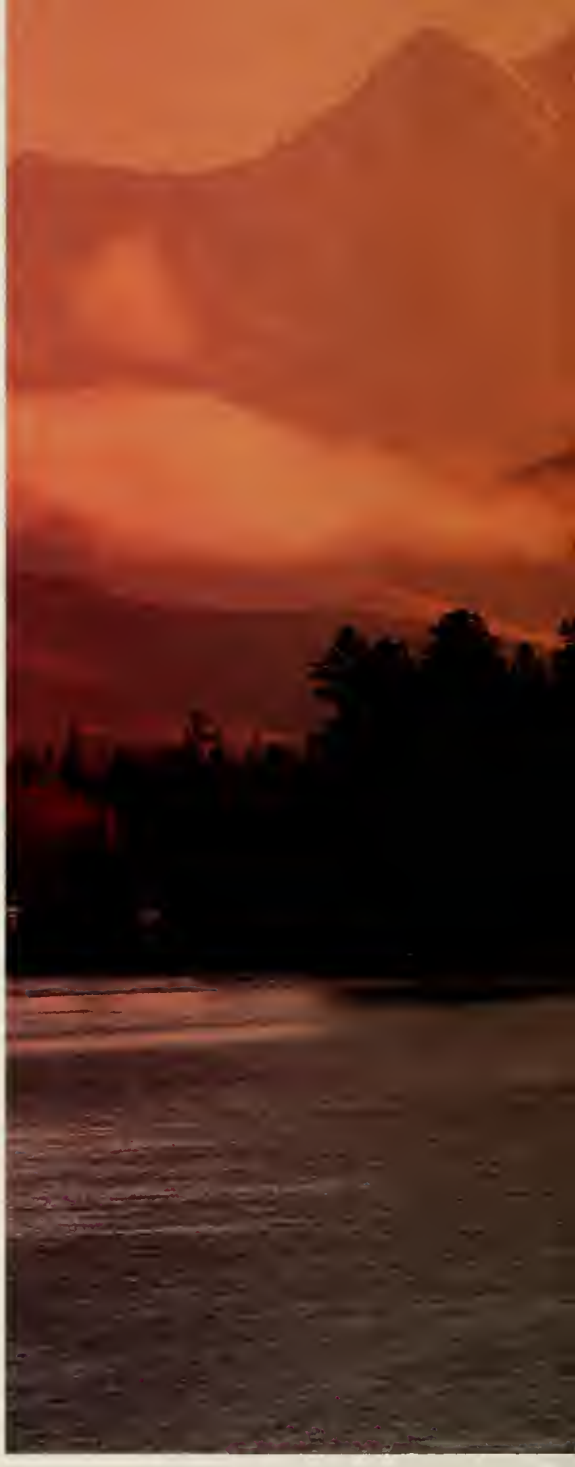
Our Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has long been active and aggressive in preserving the state's important wild habitats and cultural resources that help to shape this modern Montana. In fact, FWP has been at the business of conservation for 99 years and will celebrate its own forward-looking centennial in 2001.

The photos in this special edition of Montana Outdoors are of the Montana we all inhabit, a place as inviting and glorious as any American dream. And as the photos attest, Montana's future is in good hands.

Sincerely,

Marc Racicot

MARC RACICOT
Governor



(Above) Flathead River near Moiese
DUSAN SMETANA

FRONT COVER
Snow goose
DONALD M. JONES

BACK COVER
Black-capped chickadee
RICHARD MOUSEL

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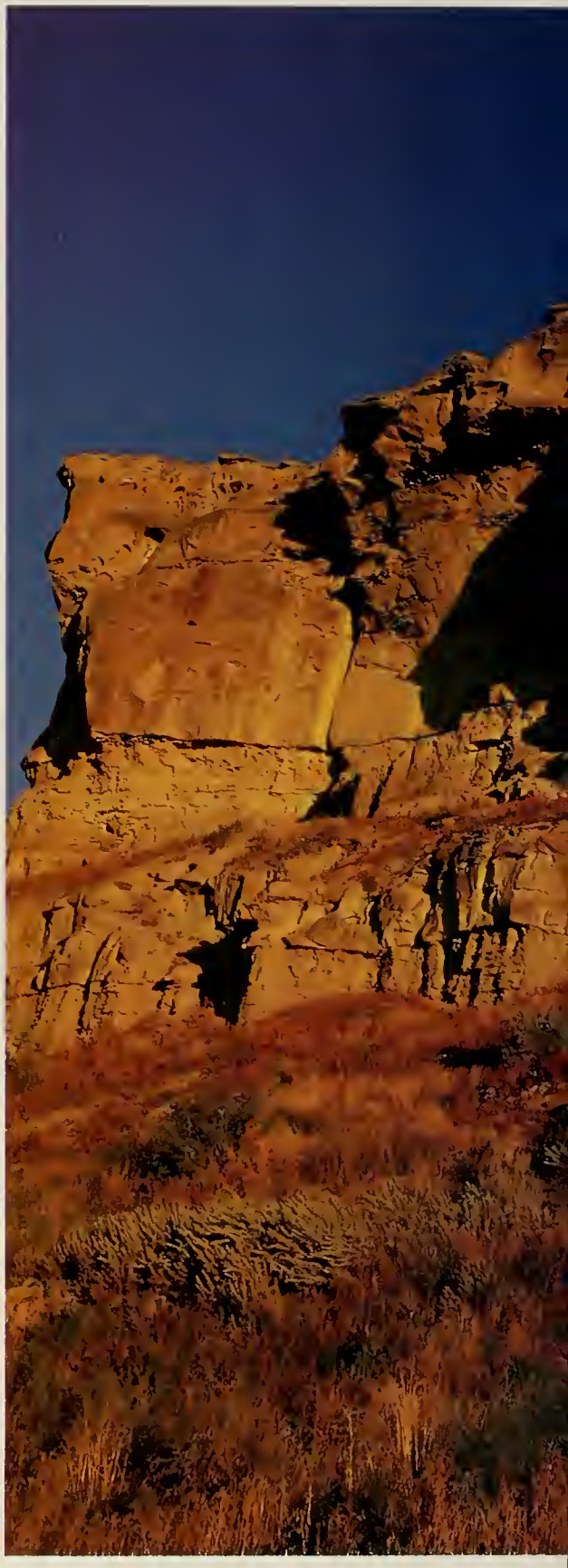
MIKE BARLOW

When Captain William Clark descended the Yellowstone River in summer of 1806 and carved his name on the rock formation now called Pompey's Pillar (right), the party observed "great numbers of antelope and elk" along the banks. But by 1924, after decades of indiscriminate hunting and turn-of-the-century sodbusting, antelope numbers in Montana had dwindled to only 3,000. Today our pronghorn population stands at about 150,000 animals—one of Montana's greatest wildlife restoration stories.



CHUCK HANEY

Below, day's first light falls on Fort Peck Lake in northeastern Montana. At right, black-tailed prairie dogs keep a watchful eye for predators.

ERWIN & PEGGY BAUER

JOHN LAMBING

MIKE BARLOW

Pheasant hunting is a fall tradition in eastern Montana, beckoning hunters and bird dogs from around the country. Introduced between 1909 and 1929, ring-necked pheasants soon flourished. The state's first pheasant season, held in November of 1928, lasted only two days—now the season lasts more than two months!

JOHN LAMBING

DONALD W. JONES

JOHN LAMBING

The remote Missouri River Breaks (opposite page, above), once a hideout for outlaws and cattle thieves, these days harbor deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and a host of other wildlife. Summer is a time of plenty for a whitetail buck in velvet (left). Since 1940, whitetails have gradually expanded their range throughout Montana. Above, the thirsty prairie near Jordan in Garfield County welcomes a June thunderstorm.

CAROL POLICH

CHUCK HANEY

Makoshika State Park near Glendive, once a humid jungle supporting dinosaurs, is now an arid landscape adorned with rock sculptures of every imaginable shape (opposite page). A modern visitor center houses interpretive displays on geology, dinosaurs, wildlife, and early human history. Forty miles west, the Terry badlands (above) glow red in the morning sun. For a splendid view of the badlands drive north from Terry two miles on Highway 253, then west six miles on a dirt road to a designated overlook and wildlife viewing area.

At right, elk hunters take a welcome break from their chilly pursuit. Below, a spring snowstorm poses a survival challenge for a great gray owl family. Frost-covered cottonwoods reflected in the Missouri River near Ulm accentuate winter's quiet beauty (opposite page).

DUSANSMETANA.COM

MILO BURCHAM

JOHN LAMBING

MIKE LOGAN

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As leaves turn color and frost rims the ponds and marshes, Montana waterfowlers anxiously await the autumn migration. At far left, a brace of pintails hang on a weathered barn. At left, a golden retriever fetches a mallard from an icy lake. Below, a duck hunting duo intently scans the November sky.

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JOHN LAMBING

JOHN LAMBING

On the opposite page, winter snows slowly yield to spring sunshine along the South Fork of Spanish Creek near Bozeman. At left, the Gallatin River Canyon lies cloaked in winter white. Below, a beaver patrols its muddy dam and a bull moose rests among the conifers.

JOHN R. FORD

DONALD M. JONES

COURTNEY COUCH

AL TROTH

Thanks to their craggy haunts, mountain goats (top) have been less affected by civilization than most of Montana's big game animals. Above, an angler returns a rainbow trout to the Beaverhead River. At right, a butte is mirrored in tranquil water on the Beartooth Plateau near Cooke City.

JOHN LAMBING

Montana's state animal and a symbol of all
that is wild, the grizzly bear is holding its own
along the northern Continental Divide.

DONALD M. JONES

Since 1996 the nationally acclaimed "Hooked on Fishing, Not On Drugs" program has been introduced to nearly 100 Montana schools and more than 5,000 students. Boys and girls alike are learning about fish and the environment, and spending quality time on the water with family and friends.

MIKE BARLOW

LARRY JAVORSKY

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MIKE BARLOW

Whether it's a day on the Yellowstone fishing with dad or bicycling to a favorite pond with a buddy, fishing is a great way to enjoy the out-of-doors.

Through sportsman-funded transplant and conservation programs, bighorn sheep (below, left) have been restored to their native ranges throughout Montana. A great blue heron (below, right) wings its way toward the nest. Rafting the Yellowstone with Winnie the Pooh (lower photo) is a summer adventure not soon to be forgotten.

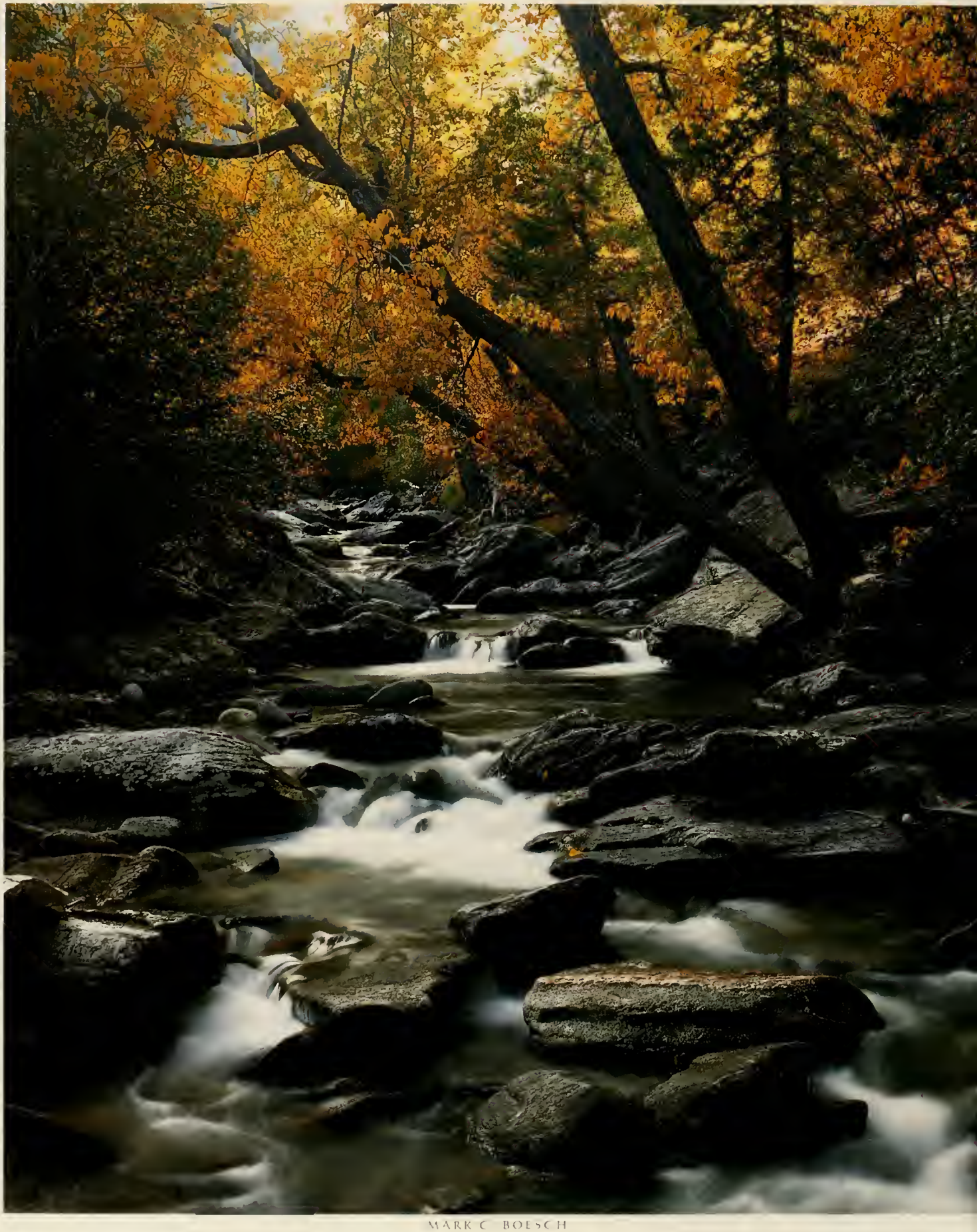
MIKE BARLOW

JOHN R. FORD

TIM EGAN

JOHN LAMBING

Autumn's golden hues brighten the lower reaches of the Big Hole River near Glen.



MARK C. BOESCH

JOHN R. FORD

RANDY SMITH

On the opposite page, the clear waters of Kootenai Creek rush toward the Bitterroot River west of Stevensville. Above left, a hungry red squirrel snacks on a pine cone. At left, a pair of cinnamon teal bask in the sun.

KRISTI DUBOIS

Above, sunrise illuminates the Rocky Mountain Front at the Blackleaf Wildlife Management Area west of Bynum. The East Front provides sanctuary to a wide array of big game animals, including mule deer (right) and elk (opposite page).

RODNEY SCHLECHT

RODNEY SCHLECHT

MARIE C. BOESCH

Lupines (above) add a splash of color to the forest floor in the Big Hole Valley. On the opposite page, morning light bathes Flathead Lake's Wildhorse Island State Park in shades of lavender, while a mother loon shepherds her downy chick.

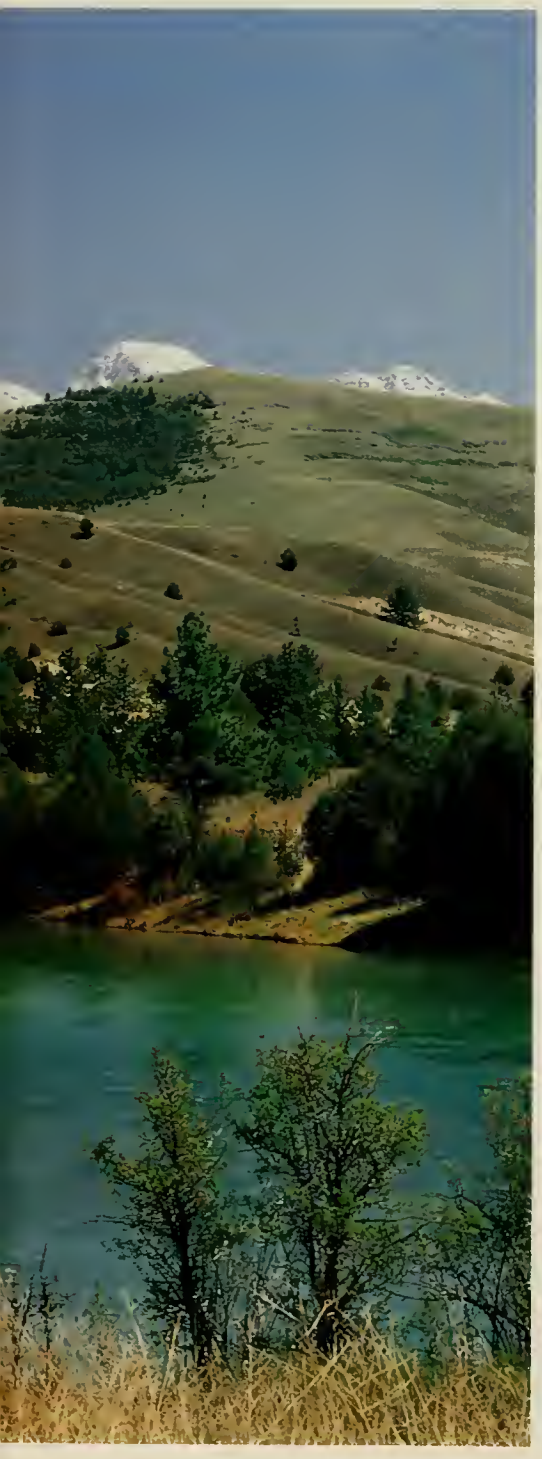
JOHN LAMBING

MICHAEL S. QUINTON

Water fun (right) abounds on the Middle Fork of the Flathead River near Glacier National Park.

KERRY T. NICKOU

JOHN LAMBING



CHUCK HANEY

At left, the snow-covered Mission Mountains form a scenic backdrop for the Flathead River west of Ronan. Above, a mountain biker blazes down a trail in Flathead County's Stillwater State Forest.

DONALD M. JONES

Black bears eat a variety of plant and animal matter, from green plants and fruits to insects, eggs, and rodents. Opposite, the Kootenai River cascades 200 feet over Kootenai Falls west of Libby. At right, young black-capped chickadees form a wild barbershop quartet.

CHUCK HANEY

RICHARD MOUSEL

JOHN LAMBING

DONALD M. JONES

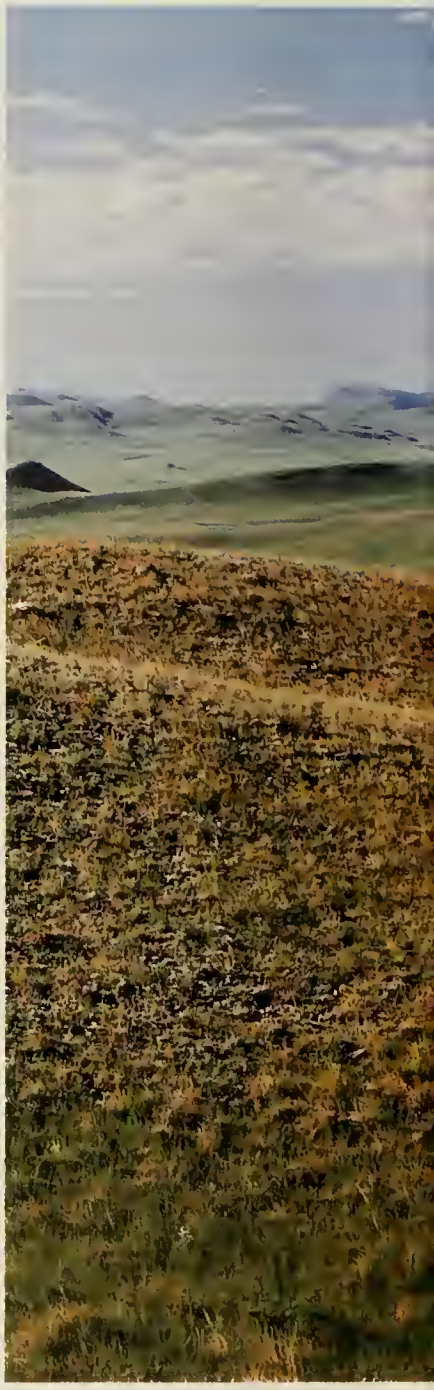
Sandhill cranes (left) are silhouetted against the October sky as they migrate through eastern Montana. Below, a hen mallard shelters her ducklings.

DONALD M. JONES

JIM HEUSTESS

At left, Belt Creek winds through a limestone canyon at Sluice Boxes State Park near Monarch. Above, an American avocet spreads its wings.

The beauty of Montana can be as subtle as green prairie hills near Augusta in early summer (right), as vivid as a ring-necked pheasant rooster's crimson cheek patch (below), or as vital as a red fox nursing its pups.



TIM CHRISTIE

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